REMARKS

Claims 1-3, 8-11, 16-19, 24-31 and new claims 32-37 are now in this application. Claims 1-3, 8-11, 16-19 and 24-31 are rejected. Claims 1, 2, 8-10, 16-18, 24 and 29-31 are amended herein to clarify the invention and to address matters of form unrelated to substantive patentability issues.

Claims 1-3, 8-11, 16-19 and 24-31 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Susman (U.S. Patent No. 5,261,041) in view of Allison (U.S. Patent No. 3,809,395).

The Examiner's rejection is respectfully traversed on the grounds that Susman and Allison do not disclose all of the features set forth in independent claims 1, 9, 17, 29, 30 and 31.

With respect to independent claims 1, 9 and 17, these claims include the feature of sequentially displaying an image corresponding to each of the plurality of frames of the image data for a first action when the operation member is not operated. Thus, the first action is represented by a plurality of frames and these frames are sequentially displayed when the operation is not being operated. The same first action is therefore repeatedly displayed when the operation member is not operating.

The Examiner acknowledges that Susman does not disclose sequentially displaying an image corresponding to each of the predetermined number of frames

of the image data for the first action stored in the storage unit when the operation member is not operated. However, the Examiner applies Allison to disclose this . feature and moreover states that there are other references in which a displayed character is shown moving when no operation is performed on the operation member.

Allison describes a combat game involving an airplane 45 (Fig. 1) or a submarine 53 (Fig. 2) displayed on a television monitor of a game machine. In the embodiment shown in Fig. 1, a marker 21 is controlled by a player to move within the area of the airplane 45, which is maintained in a stationary position, while the other player controls a marker 19 (a bullet) which is aimed at marker 21. If the bullet 19 comes close to or intercepts the marker 21 in the region of the contour of the aircraft 45, then both the marker 21 and the bullet 19 together disappear from the screen which is an indication of "hit". The airplane 45 does not move during the game. Similarly, Fig. 2 represents a submarine-type game in which one player moves a target marker 21 at any desired position along a path 51 and another player causes a marker 19 to move from the leftmost position such that when the marker 19 comes close or intercepts the target marker 21, both markers will be extinguished, indicating a hit. The submarine 53 also does not move.

There are several differences between the claimed invention and the game system of Allison. First, the airplane and submarine do not have two different types of moving actions and thus, these objects cannot have any first action which can be sequentially displayed and a second action different than the first action. Second, .

there is no action represented by a plurality of frames of image data which is repeatedly displayed, i.e., a continuous display of the same action, in the absence of operation of an operation member. Third, the airplane or submarine are not "play characters" in that they are not human and do not resemble humans (applicable to new claims 32-34).

Accordingly, Allison does not disclose that images relating to a <u>moving</u> action of a play character are sequentially displayed while an operation member is not being operated and therefore does not overcome the deficiencies of Susman.

As to the possibility of other prior art references which might show this feature, it is pointed out that (human) play characters are typically controlled by an external drive source, e.g., an operation controller, so that by manipulating the operation controller, the player can move the play character. However, when the player ceases operating the controller, movement of the play character likewise ceases. For example, the early Super Mario Character is controlled by a controller operated by a player but when the player stops manipulating the controller, all movement of the character ceases.

It is therefore respectfully submitted that the feature of sequentially displaying an image corresponding to frames of the image data for a first action relating to a moving action of a play character when the operation member is not operated is novel and not disclosed in the cited prior art. Therefore, the embodiments

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of the invention set forth in claims 1-3, 8-11, 16-19 and 24-28 are patentable over the prior art of record.

With respect to independent claims 29-31, the Examiner's rejection of these claims is respectfully traversed on the grounds that the cited prior art does not disclose a display control unit arranged such that the moving speed of a <u>human</u> play character displayed on a monitor varies according to the operated amount of an operation member, with the unit moved amount of the play character being defined as a distance of the movement of the play character and being set at a constant value regardless of the moving speed of the play character.

For instance, for a game which is a 100 meter dash and a human runner is involved, there could be a warm-up run for the 100 meter dash race and then an actual race. In both cases, the running movement cycle includes a step for moving a left leg forward and another step for moving a right leg forward. However, the movement amount for a cycle for the warm-up run is shorter than that for the actual race. So, the larger the movement amount and faster the speed, there will be a lower number of steps required to complete the 100 meter actual race.

The Examiner referred to Fig. 4 of Susman when discussing the rejection of claims 8, 16, 24 which include similar subject matter as in claims 29-31. The Examiner states that the more the player moves the mouse, the farther the object moves on the screen.

Fig. 4 of Susman shows linear motion of polygon 401 representing an object in two-dimensions. Applying the Examiner's reasoning, if the mouse is operated quickly to thereby increase the movement speed of the mouse, then the movement amount of the polygon 401 from t=1 to t=4 should increase.

However, this is in direct contrast to the claimed invention wherein the unit moved amount of the play character is set at a constant value "regardless of the moving speed of the play character", i.e., the moving speed changes but in spite of the changes in the moving speed, the unit moved distance does not change. Thus, if the operation member, e.g., a mouse, is operated quickly, it does not have any affect on the movement amount of the play character. The play character will move the same distance regardless of how quickly, or slowly, the mouse is operated.

It is therefore respectfully submitted that the feature of the unit moved amount of the play character being defined as a distance of the movement of the play character and being set at a constant value regardless of the moving speed of the play character is novel and not disclosed in the cited prior art. The embodiments of the invention set forth in claims 29-31 are therefore patentable over the prior art of record.
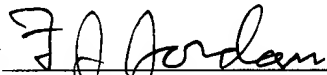
In view of the arguments presented above, it is respectfully submitted that Susman and Allison do not disclose all of the features set forth in the claims and

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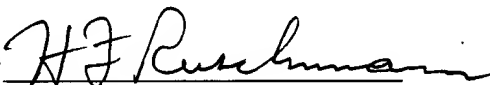therefore cannot be combined to render unpatentable the claimed embodiments of

the invention.

One further claim in excess of twenty is added. Accordingly, please charge

the fee of $18 to Deposit Account No. 10-1250.

In light of the foregoing, the application is now believed to be in proper form

for allowance of all claims and notice to that effect is earnestly solicited. Please

charge any deficiency or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 10-1250.

Respectfully submitted,
JORDAN AND HAMBURG LLP

By _____
Frank J. Jordan
Reg. No. 20,456
Attorney for Applicants

and,

By _____
Herbert F. Ruschmann
Reg. No. 35,341
Attorney for Applicants

Jordan and Hamburg LLP
122 East 42nd Street
New York, New York 10168
(212) 986-2340